[Florence Haines Appenyi in The Current.]
She walked leisurely alon; Sixteenth street in San Francisco one morning last May, a very stately looking old lady, with silvery curls about her face. Upon her head she wore a widow's cap, shaped like a coronet, and her full black dress fell in soft folds about her. An old gentleman, bowed and decrepit, his baid head covered with a black skull cap, watched her with deep interest as she approached, from his post on the steps of the Sixteenth street market.
Chancing to look up, she caught his eye.

looking cautiously about to see that he was not ob erved, bent down and whispered con-

fidentially in her ear:
"Say, do you like peanuts!"
The old lady's eyes beamed.
"Like them! I just love them."

Again he gave an apprehensive glance around, then brought to view a huge paper bag which he had artfully concealed be-neath his coat. "Look here!" be said, triumphantly. "Ever

see so many in your life?'
She gave a little cry of delight. "Oh, where did you get them?"
"Hushi don't speak so loud. Some one
might bear us." He had lowered his own

might bear us." He had lowered his own voice to a whisper again. "The folks sent me to get some meat for dinner. Seventy-five cents! And I spent it all for peanuts!"

He laughed gleefully over the embezzlement, and the old lady gave vent to a funny little bubble of laughter. The sound of her merriment seemed to reassure him, dispelling any latent suspicions he may have cherished concerning her good faith.

"There are some hills over there," waving his long, thin hand toward the north—"where we could go and eat them, and no

"where we could go and eat them, and no one would catch us." She looked at him gratefully. "That would be splendid," she assented.

would be splendid," she assented.

For some moments they strolled along insilence, then he broke the silence.

"I once read a capital book—if I could
only remember the name. I have it—'Crusoe,' 'Robinson Crusoe'—"

"Precisely what I was thinking about,"
interrupted his companion pensively. "I
could be Robinson Crusoe and you could be
my man Friday."

my man Friday."
"Pao! That wouldn't do at all. You'd make a pretty Crusce! I will be Crusce, and you shall be my man Friday."

The old lady, who did not seam to be of a combative turn, relapsed into a hurt silence. As they passed a little fruit stand on Folsom streat her face brightened.

"We cought to have something done" at

street her face brightened.

"We ought to have something else," she suggested. "We should grow tired of nuts."
Her comrade looked gloomy. "Wish I had thought of that. Haven't got another cent," he added, plaintively.

"Oh, I have plenty of change. I always correst my nurse in my racticule." the old lady remarked, and from the depths of the large embroidered bag which hung upon her arm she drew forth a little beaded purse, within whose glittering meshes the cleam of within whose glittering meshes the gleam of

"Give me 10 cents worth of oranges, 10 cents worth of grapes, and a dollar's worth cents worth of grapes, and a dollar's worth of peppermint [drops," she said, smilingly, to the young fellow who came forward to wait upon her The boy made up the packages with a repressed chuckle, and looked curiously at the coins she tendered in payment, the most recent of which hore the date of twenty years before.

The old couple left the store and wandered off in the direction of Twin Paaks which

off in the direction of Twin Peaks, which loomed before them in the distance. They had not gone many blocks before the old lady exhibited s gns of weariness. "It is so far to the hills," she murmured. "There is a place," pointing toward the east,

"where there are no houses. Why not go there in-tead?"

"That's always the way with girls. They never atick to anything." He darted a keen look of suspicion upon her. "Perhaps you think I'm not capable of taking care of myself! Might get run over, or lost, or something of the kind!"
"No indeed." arthured the lede always.

"No, indeed," returned the lady, placidly.
"Such an idea never entered my head."
As they passed along the streets those who met them commented upon their stately and venerable aspect. "Some old people going to see their grandchildren, and laden down with all safe of recoding wi down with all sorts of goodies, with which to gladden the little folks," remarked one. "More probably their great-grandchildren," quoth the one addressed; and both turned to follow with their eyes the aged and be-

nevolent couple.

Passing tasteful homes surrounded with large grounds and a wealth of flowers, they came to smaller houses, whence issued the sound of childish prattle, with now and then an aristocratic pioneer, raising its three-storied walls haughtily above its humble neighbors. Leaving these far behind, they reached at last a point where the street narrowed into a single wagon-road, which disappeared over a small eminence beyond. Tolling up this rise they found themselves in a broad, depressed tract, sloping down to a small marsh on the west, and securely cut off from observation save from distant nevolent couple. off from observation save from distant houses on the hill 'eyond,

"Isn't it lovely?" cried the old lady in an ecstasy of delight.

Her companion looked somewhat contemptuously about the barron ground on

which they stood, and at the geese wadding through the mud flat below.

"Not much chance to scrape a living here," he responded, "unless I might perhaps fetch one of those ganders with a stone."

"Surely you wouldn't do anything so cruel," she cried, grasping his arm and shaking it. With a sullen grace he loosed his hold upon the stone he had picked up.

"Let's begin eating," he said, eagerly.

"That wouldn't be nice at all. We must

"Fudge! Where you going to get all those things!"

She looked up at him triumphantly, and, opening her recticule, drew forth a number of odd bits of broken crockery and glassware she had slyly picked up from time to time as they wandered through the streets. "Aren't they beautiful? See this pretty flowered china, and this with a gilt stripe

"Humph! That's not so bad," he commented, with an air of mild approval.
"Now, be a good boy and make me a little cupboard," she urged, "while I am getting the dishes ready," and drawing from her pocket a snowy handkerchief she began to polish them vigorously.

The old man strolled about and found a few broken planks, which he converted into shelves, separated from each other by fragments of brick and stones. As he completed his task his companion called out:

"Did you drink first? How very rude?

She viewed him sternly, and carefully wiped the edges of the cup before putting it to her lips.

"It's nothing to a st aming cup of coffee,"

"It's nothing to a st aming cup of coffee," observed the old man evasively.

"Or a nice hot cup of tea. How I wish I had one," she echoed.

When they finished their repast the old lady rose a little unsteadily, cramped from her uncomfortable posture upon the ground. She arranged the broken crockery upon th cupboard shelves, dreamily smiling as she did so. Then she turned with an energetic air:

did so. Then she turned with an energetic air:

"We must hurry now and get our house built. Did you ever make one?"

"It seems to me I did—once," said the old man, absently. "But it takes timbers and boards and nails, and a saw."

"Oh dear me!" laughed the amiable old lady. "Just hear him talk! Why, I can make the nicest house you ever saw out of stones and bricks. That is the way we girls always do in the schoolyard. Just lay them in rows for walls, don't you know?"

Her aged companion busied himself industriously, bringing her bits of rocks, which she formed into intersecting chains upon the ground, with here and there a break between. When hey paused to rest she proudly designated the boundries of the parior, sitting-room, ining-room and kitchen, which she had constructed.

"Now you can go in the parior and sit down, and I shall stay in the sitting-room and knite," and she brought forth her work from the capacious reticule. "But there! How many times will I have to tell you not to walk over the walls, but come through the doors. There! You've gone out over the walls, and now you are coming through a window. Oh, dear! oh, dear!"

"Stuff and nonsense! What's the difference?" retorted the old man, irascibly.

"Stuff and nonsense! What's the differ-ence?" retorted the old man, irascibly. "That's right, new. Go to bawling, will you, toot like a cilly right." just like a silly girli"
"Fm not crying, and Fm no sillier than you," and the old lady bridled. "Fd thank

His gentle foe shuddered. "I never could play that. War is too dreadful," she said. "Poor little Jimmie Hale. Such a pleasant-tempered, gay young lad he was, but they brought him back from the Maxican war with a bullet hole in his breast. Deary me how mixed up I am. That wasn't Jimmie Hale. That was a brown-bearded, gallant man, and—Jimmie—why, Jimmie is a boy, and gave me the book the teacher gave him on last prize-day." She smiled mistilly. "Well," said her companion, impatient of these rominiscences, "if war don't suit you, how would you like to have a game of mumblepeg?"

"What?" Her curiosity was aroused, and her voice expressed warm interest.

"Mumblepeg." He drew from his pocket an old jack-knife, very loose in the joints, and opened one of the blades.

"First you place it across the palm of your

"First you place it across the palm of your hand and toss it up over—so!" The knife turned a somersault in the air, and the blade was deeply buried in the ground. He pulled

air, but fell flat upon its side.

"Whenever one misses it's the other's turn. But I'm just showing you now, you know. The one who beats gets all the marbles. Next time comes this," and holding the blade between his finger and thumb, he essayed to give it a desperate flip in the air, but failing to make it describe the proper curve, the sharp blade de cended upon his hand, cutting a deep gast in the paim. He made light of the injury, and endeavored to staunch the blood with his red silk hand-kerchief. But his companion, greatly distressed, hurried him down to the shallow

the little stream, wound her own handkerchief tenderly about the hand.

Standing there, she turned, and looking
off to the southeast, espied white shafts
gleaming amid a setting of green.

"I declare! There's a graveyard. Let us
go and see it. I love graveyards; don't
you!" cried the old lady, excitedly.

"Pooh! Don't care much about them.
Girls always have such queer notions," returned the old man; but he accompanied
her as she set eagerly off in the direction of
the cemetery. Over the rough and stony
ground they labored, plodding through
clayey embankments and across narrow ditches. Reaching level ground
at last, and roaming along streets
and by-ways, they came at longth to the
old mission church, quaint and ancient, with
its rude Moorish architecture and thick
adobe walls. They paused and gazed for a
moment at the aged structure, before entering the decrepit gate which led to the burying ground of the old mission.

A policeman, who had been standing in
the shadow of the church and closely following their movements, drew from his pocket
a copy of the afternoon paper, and re-read
the following notices:

a copy of the afternoon paper, and re-read the following notices:

Agentleman, residing at 1887 Howard street, has reported to the police that his father, aged 83, and childish, left home early this forence on an errand to the market near by, and has not since returned information leading to the discovery of his whereabouts will be thankfully received.

An aged lady is also reported lost from her residence 1793 Felsom street. She was

CLARENCE WILDER A SHFORD & ASHFORD.

"Guess I'll go across the street and telephone down to the central station," soliloquized the officer.

Meanwhile the singular pair pursued their way along the tangled paths which intersected the old cemetery. A strange hush reigned throughout the place. Here and there a startled bird flew from its nest.

"We might play hide and seek among the stones," suggested the old man, artlessly.

The old lady looked at him severely.

"You must be a very wicked boy to think of such a thing, Let us walk about and spell the names and verses on the stones, and smell the flowers," she added gently.

"I don't like to do that," said her companion, peevishly. "The names are too hard

panion, peevishly. "The names are too hard and long. 'F-ra-n-c-i-s-c-a Ma-r-i-a De-R-i-m-e-g-n-a.' What a queer name. And when did she die!—1835. What year is this!"

"Thirty-six, isn't it!" came the doubtful

response.
"Pshaw! That was last year or the year before. Let me see! I was born in—" "Ob, don't talk dates. I never could keep the absurd things in my head," said the oli lady, smiling. "Just look at this cunning little grave, all covered with myrtle and pansies. It must have been a baby—a sweet little baby. But here are some naughty weeds that are trying to choke out the pretty

dowers," burst from her lips. In that moment the burden of the forgotten years descended

burden of the forgotten years upon her,

Dropping upon her knees, she flung her arm protectingly over the tiny mound, and laid her withered face among the biossoms.

"My darling! Mother's precious!" she cried, "Gone so long from these empty arms. When will I see you again, my dearest?" And she moaned and sobbed in a tearless anguish.

less anguish.

The voice of the old man, absently repeating some familiar words, fell upon her

cheeks, once round and fresh with the bloom of youth.

"My graves, my graves, if they had only let me have my graves! They would not let me come," she meaned, "They feared the memories they would call back would be too much for my old heart. It is many a long year since I have seen them. The young and strong have little thought beyond the busy, active world, in which they live. But the heart of old age is buried in the tomb, and the mind lives only in memories of the past."

Her tone had passed from passionate pro-

Her tone had passed from passionate pro-

"they placed my husband's body, washed ashore from the wreck of the Vulcan twenty years ago. Ah, the grief was once so bitter, but time has softened it, and I can look for-

but time has softened it, and I can look forward now to soon rejoining the dear hearts who are awaiting me."

The burden of the forgotten years had returned, but after the first shock had passed away the awakened memories brought only peace and healing, effacing all knowledge of the days of weakness which had intervened. The old man sat with his chin resting in his hand. The look of vacancy had vanished from his face, and his eyes, fastened upon the inscription on the tall, white stone, sought to arrest some clew which eluded the clouded intellect. She followed the direction of his eyes. tion of his eyes.

incorruptible.

"Ah, yes; I knew him well," the old man responded, sadly. He remained absorbed in grave reflections for some moments. Then arose and began to cull roses from the long branches which ran riot along the path and embraced the gnarled trees. He tastefully arranged them in bunches, mistily veiled beneath the silvery grasses which grew in wild profusion throughout the neglected spot. Returning to where he had left his companion, he presented them to her with a certain courtly grace and somewhat pompous air, in curious contrast with his bowed shoulders and tottering steps.

courtesy to the gentler sex, either in the days of his prime, when he wielded the sceptre of political power, or when he has reached the era of feeble old age, and the world which once did him homage has for-gotten him."

As they turned to go she cast one lov-ing glance back toward the neglected graves. At the gate he offered her his arm with an air of gentle breeding; she leaned heavily upon it, for her old feet had no traveled so far for many a year, and she was faint and weary.

just alighted from a carriage a block away, and was approaching in breathless haste. Her countenance brightened as she perceived

interrogation.
"Mother, mother! You don't know how

There is a milch cow for every four peo-

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A TRUANT EPISODE.

"Do come here and see what a sweet flat rock I have found for a table. We'll eat right now, and build the house afterward."

With tremulous eagerness they marshaled out their comestibles. The broken bits of glass and chins were heaped with dissected oranges and grapes plucked from the stem. A little pink and white pyramid of candy ornamented the center, and about it they arranged some sprays of wild lupine. A liberal allowance of peanuts was placed at either end of the rock. The old gentleman attacked the banquet with the careless gusto of a greedy boy, while the old lady ate in a dainty, fastidious way. They had not progressed far before she gave a little shocked exclamation.

"Mercy! We haven't any napkins."

Chancing to look up, she caught his eye.

A singular understanding seemed to be at once established between them.

He beckened to her mysteriously, and

shocked exclamation.

"Mercy! We haven't any napkina."

"Glad of it! I despise napkins," retorted her reckless vis.a.vis. She viewed him with a delicate air of wonder.

"Joshua is just so—my brother Joshua. You don't know what a smart boy he is for figures. Dear me, I am so thirsty."

The old man rose with alacrity.

"Give me that broken cup," he said.

"There is a little spring around here where the water trickles from the rocks."

When he returned he wiped his lips sur-

When he returned he wiped his lips sur-reptitiously. His companion detected the

you," and the old lady bridled. "I'd thank you to behave yourself or I'll go straight home and tell my—" She broke off suddenly, and looked vaguely about at earth and sky in startled questioning.

"There, there, don't get huffy. We'll play war," he added, a bright thought striking him. "This is the battle of Bunker Hill. You are the Tories, and here I come with my cannon. Boom!"

His gentle foe shuddered. "I never could play that. War is too dreadful," she said.

it out with an air of triumph. "Then you place it on the back of the hand and toss it up again." The knife revolved anew in the air, but fell flat upon its side.

tressed, hurried him down to the shallow brooklet, and after bathing the wound in the little stream, wound her own handker-chief tenderly about the hand.

attired in a plain black bombazine, and car-ried in her hand an embroidered reticule, tied with black ribbon. "Guess I'll go across the street and tele-

She carefully uprooted the noxious in-truders and bent forward to decipher the lettering upon the stone. Then she started wildly, and looked around her. A low wail

ear.
The tears gushed in a sudden shower from her faded blue eyes and over her wrinkled cheeks, once round and fresh with the bloom

Her tone had passed from passionate protesting pain to the voice of one sunk in gentle reverie. She touched the small mound with a caressing hand:

"My baby lies here," she marmused, "any beautiful, unmpted, laughing baby, who would have been a strong man were he with me to-day on earth. Here my two daughters were laid side by side, their fair faces full of the promise of a noble womanhood. And there," pointing to the long, grassy mound with the tall, white stone at its head, "they placed my husband's body, washed

"Yes, it was a worthy name. San Francisco never had a better citizen, nor Cali ifornia a state treasurer more honest and incorruptible.

curious contrast with his bower and tottering steps.

"Madam, I beg you will accept these flowers to beautify these sacred mounds. I doubt if you have recognized me, madam. I am John A. Meredith, formerly United States senator. It can never be said that John A. Meredith was deficient in a proper courtesy to the gentler sex, either in the courtesy to the gentler sex, either in the

and she was faint and weary.

The policeman who was idly leaning against a lamp-post outside, nodded intelligently to a richly-dressed woman who had

the dignified, elderly couple who were com-ing through the gate.
"Well, Eliza?" said the old lady in calm "Mother, mother! You don't know how we have worried about you. Why did you leave us so and where have you been?"

"Madam," interrupted the tall, white-haired old gentlemen in reverent tones.

"We have been visiting the graves of our departed friends. Your mother is fatigued from her walk. Allow me to call your errriage."

The officer anticipated his movement. As they stood waiting on the sidewalk the younger woman looked from one old face to the other, with moist eyes and tremulous inquiry. The old man saw her look and interpreted it aright.

"Yes, my dear," he replied. "I sometimes pleases the hand of Time to weave mists about wom and weary brains. But in God's good time the light returns, never again to wane until replaced with the glorious beacon of Eternity.

There is a milch cow for every four peo-